

NH Division of Personnel

Up Close and Personal with DOT Plow Drivers During a Blizzard

Media "Rides-Along" Gives Public Unique Glimpse
Inside the Orange Truck

If you live in New Hampshire you know them. They've always been there during winter snowstorms. You hear the rumble of the plow truck going by in the middle of the night, and you feel a little more secure as you roll over for another few hours of sleep. They are the highway maintainers behind the wheels of those huge orange State Department of Transportation trucks who get the job done year after year in the worst of weather.

For the most part they are anonymous, and they probably prefer it that way. But on one unprecedented day several DOT plow drivers shared their cabs with news reporters from three newspapers, one television station and NH Public Radio during a brutal nor'easter that



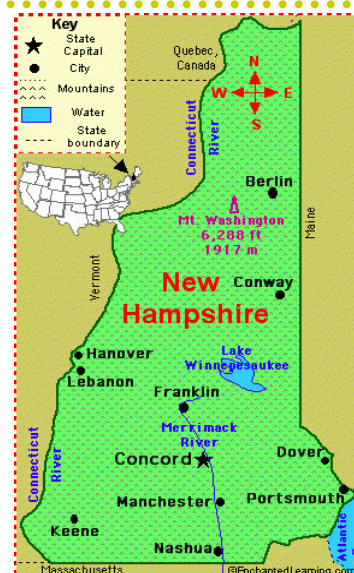
John Sartorelli [Transportation] shows Governor John Lynch the mechanics of plowing a road.

lasted more than 18 hours on January 12. On the same day Governor John Lynch took his first ride in a state plow, and Executive Councilor Ray Burton hitched a plow ride in the North Country. The inside look at the challenges of driving a state snowplow provided a unique insight for the public. It also gave the NHDOT plow drivers a great opportunity

to educate New Hampshire drivers about the work they do on their behalf.

Keene Sentinel reporter Casey Farrar not only accepted the invitation to a pre-storm briefing on the day before, she was also among the first to arrive at the District 4 patrol facility in Swanzy shortly before 1:00 am. In her article enti-

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Governor Lynch leaving Shed 505

tled “Storm Riders” she told of the DOT “night riders” who make the decision to call in the crews after darkness falls.

“They’re the eyes out there at night, seeing what’s happening,” District 4 Engineer Graham said. “It’s a balance between calling (crews) in too early and calling them out too late. “You don’t want to call people in and have them sitting around waiting for snow, because overtime is a costly operation, but you also want to make sure they’re out there treating the roads before they get hard-packed.”

Farrar introduced her readers to Patrol Foreman Robert Hebert, Robert Vorce and Tyler Tommila. All convey a dedication to their jobs and their mission while relat-

down.”

Along the very busy Interstate 93 corridor south of Manchester, *Lawrence Eagle Tribune* reporter John Toole rode with a DOT plow driver out of the District 5 Derry patrol facility. The employee said he tells his wife, “If you see a plow truck, stay behind it.” “The safest place in a snowstorm is behind us,” said the employee as he stares through the blinding snow.

The drivers will tell you the plow operators are always thinking about the travelers on the road. “Our concern is for them,” and “We don’t want to see anybody hurt.”

In the Seacoast

ing the difficulty of doing their jobs in difficult weather conditions while sharing the road. “People get really mad,” Tommila said. “They’ll call to complain if we’re not out here, but then they’ll complain if we slow them

region, *Foster’s Daily Democrat* reporter Scott Kinney joined District 6 plow driver Brian Hayes at the Dover patrol facility for his route that included NH 108. “Brian Hayes puts foam earplugs in,” Kinney’s article begins. “After 20 hours of it, it gets kind of old,” he explains as he turns the ignition of the diesel engine powering the Department of Transportation plow truck on Wednesday shortly after noon.

The news reports, while different, all have common themes. Plowing roads in New Hampshire is not easy, but those who do it for the Department of Transportation are dedicated to the task and take great pride in their work. It’s a message that can’t be told too many times.

One DOT plow driver said to the reporter, “You’ve got to keep it safe for the public. It’s a matter of doing the job.” ■

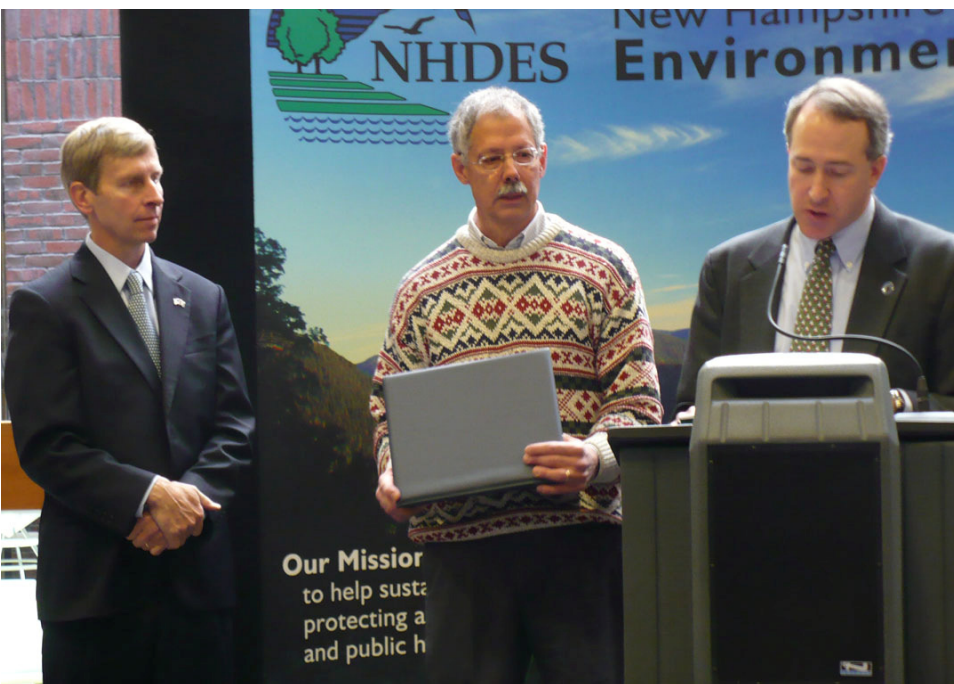


Rick Chormann, DES Recognized

Frederick H. “Rick” Chormann, Jr., Administrator II, was recently presented with the David S. Chase Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievements in Science.

Rick has, time and time again, taken proactive steps, and maximized resources using creativity, insight and integrity to enhance the water, environmental, geologic, and mapping programs for the State of New Hampshire. Rick has improved the science, data collection, and accessibility of information for DES, as well as the public at large.

Rick thoroughly reviews the current scientific literature from some of the top geosciences journals to use new scientific methods to keep New Hampshire Geological Survey products on the cutting edge of science. Rick has been on the forefront of using GIS technology at DES, and took a leading role in advancing the Fluvial Geomorphology Program, designed to provide scientific support to both DES and other state agencies in addressing flooding and resource protection issues along the state’s rivers. The National Hydrography Dataset for New Hampshire, essentially a digital map with associated databases of all of the state’s surface waters, is a hugely valuable tool for programs across DES, and really owes its existence and robustness to Rick’s efforts. Like-



wise, the state’s network of long-term groundwater monitoring wells is more comprehensive than it would have been without Rick’s efforts to incorporate wells previously drilled, but slated to be abandoned, by the US Geological Survey.

Throughout Rick’s 20-plus year career at DES, his initiative and care to create accurate and scientifically viable databases accessible through the DES website has provided invaluable information to countless well drillers, scientists, regulators and the public. Rick has made innumerable contributions to the fields of hydrography, geology and mapping in support of the DES mission to help sustain a high quality of life for all by protecting

and restoring the environment and public health in New Hampshire. ■

[Above photo: Gov. John Lynch, 2010 Chase Award Winner Rick Chormann, and Commissioner Tom Burack.]

Our greatest glory
is not in never fal-
ling, but in rising
every time we fall.

Confucius

Steve Landry—DES 2010 Employee of the Year

Stephen Landry, Environmentalist IV, Merrimack Watershed Supervisor, is the 2010 DES Employee of the Year because he excels in so many areas and inspires DES employees and New Hampshire citizens alike with his dedication, leadership and public service.

Steve shouldered the load to address changes in the Suncook River brought about when the river suddenly changed course during the Mother's Day Flood of 2006. Steve took action to address the situation by leading a geomorphic analysis to identify possible alternatives and select the best solution. He worked tirelessly to raise funds, attended numerous public meetings, and is responsible for the great progress made to date in addressing what will be a long-term effort to stabilize the river in its new channel while also protecting lives and property in the river corridor.

"Steve is a leader with a true public service ethic, a hard worker who knows how to build and sustain personal relationships, and an inspiration to all DES employees"

Another example of Steve's leadership is the Black Brook restoration project in Manchester. Along with Jeff Marcoux, Environmentalist III, Steve took swift action to



[Photo above: Steve Landry, center, receives plaudits from Gov. Lynch, left, Commissioner Busrack, and fellow nominees upon being named the 2010 DES Employee of the Year.]

preserve historical ice harvesting artifacts that were exposed in the sediment washed away when the Maxwell Pond dam was removed. Steve and Jeff were presented the prestigious "Preservation of Historic Artifacts" award by the Manchester Historic Association in 2010 for this effort.

Steve is a tremendous leader within the DES community as well. As he did during Steve Couture's first tour of duty in Iraq, Steve Landry led the "DES Cou-

ture Support Crew" to make sure that Couture and his fellow soldiers were made as comfortable as possible during his second tour. It is a tribute to Steve Landry's leadership that the Department of Defense recognized DES in 2010 with the "Above and Beyond Award" for the support provided to Steve Couture, his unit and his family. In addition, each year Steve captains the DES team in the state agency competition at the SEA 5K road race. It is no stretch to say that Steve's enthusiasm and leadership have had a lot to do with DES winning that event 15 out of the last 16 years, including the 2010 race.

Steve's environmental work doesn't end at DES. As a volunteer, he is vice chair of the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee and leads the most extensive volunteer river biological monitoring program in the state.

Steve is a leader with a true public service ethic, a hard worker who knows how to build and sustain personal relationships, and an inspiration to all DES employees. ■

The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government.
Thomas Jefferson

Environmental Services Celebrates Employee Longevity

The Department of Environmental Services regularly celebrates employee accomplishments including valuing years of dedicated service. Below are the names of employees recently recognized for their years of service.

35 YEARS

James B. Gill	Water
Robert C. Lyon	Commissioner Office

25 YEARS

Michael J. Walls	Commissioner Office
Roy D. Gilbreth	Water
Patricia A. Hannon	Water
David S. Leathers	Waste Management
John M. Regan	Waste Management
Nancy M. Kursewicz	Waste Management
Teresa M. Ferrara	Commissioner Office
Lisa A. Fortier	Water
Richard P. Schofield	Water
Charles P. Berube	Waste Management
Edward R. Kirpolenko	Water
Sarah Pillsbury	Water
Maureen A. Estabrook	Waste Management
Michael E. Galuszka	Waste Management

20 YEARS

Deborah E. Soule	Water
Timothy J. Verville	Air Resources
Anne M. Keach	Air Resources
Cheryl F. McGary	Waste Management
Mark A. Corliss	Water
Richard C. Skarinka	Water
Alan H. Moulton	Air Resources
Mary Ann Tilton	Water

15 YEARS

Brenda D. Constant	Water
Barbara McMillan	Water

Robert R. Scott	Air Resources
David S. Gordon	Air Resources
James R. Poisson	Air Resources
Harrison "Chip" D. Mackey	Water
Grace E. Levergood	Water
Jocelyn S. Degler	Water
Raymond T. Gordon, III	Water

10 YEARS

Derek S. Bennett	Water
Christian P. Williams	Water
Brandon M. Kernen	Water
Maria L. Michel	Waste Management
Craig D. Rennie	Water
Todd A. Moore	Air Resources
Joann Robinson	Water
David E. Neils	Water
Leah L. McKenna	Water
Michael P. O'Brien	Air Resources
Tina M. Wells	Commissioner Office
Elaine M. Bolduc	Commissioner Office
Carolyn B. Russell	Commissioner Office
Craig M. Shippee	Water
Susan A. Willoughby	Water
Alicia C. Carlson	Water
Barbara L. Hoffman	Air Resources
Padmaja Baru	Air Resources
Ann-Marie Smith	Commissioner Office
Laura J. Kieronski	Waste Management
Dale R. Keirstead	Water
Amy C. Clark	Water
Vernon C. "Chris" Hipkiss	Water
Timothy D. Sweatt	Water
Debra A. Sonderegger	Water
Sara J. Johnson	Commissioner Office
Kathleen A. Drake	Water

The Division of Personnel would like to thank all of these employees for their many years of dedicated service. **Thank YOU** for being there to protect our natural resources. You are to be honored and respected!

Support New Hampshire's Heritage—Buy a “Moose Plate”

The next time you're driving around New Hampshire, take a moment to notice some of the things that make our state so special. Our landscapes are breathtaking, our wildlife is amazing and our historical buildings, art and artifacts all combine to tell the story of who we are. And as you're driving—or even if you're stuck in traffic—look and see how many of our residents support New Hampshire's natural, historical and cultural heritage.

How can you tell? It's easy! Look for a “Moose Plate” on their vehicle. New Hampshire's Conservation License Plates—affectionately called “Moose Plates”—help conserve our heritage. Since 2001, the Conservation License Plate program has contributed to the ongoing success of more than 150 projects around the state.

All funds raised through the purchase of Conservation License Plates are used for the promotion, protection and investment in New Hampshire's natural, cultural and historic resources.

The revenue is distributed to designated state agencies, including the Department of Cultural Resources, Fish and Game Department, the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), the Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), the State Conservation Committee and the Department of Transportation.

These agencies use “Moose Plate” funds for a variety of projects, including expanding roadside wildflower and lilac plantings; researching and managing non-game wildlife species and native plant species (as well as educating the

public about them); preserving and sometimes purchasing significant publicly owned historic properties, works of art, artifacts and archaeological sites; providing grants to counties, municipalities and non-profits for resource conservation projects; and many other projects that help maintain New Hampshire's unique heritage. Every county in the state has benefitted from “Moose Plate” projects.

Having a “Moose Plate” on your vehicle only costs \$30 a year—that's about 8 cents a day—and it's easy to do. Just ask for the plate when you register your vehicle, and then renew your plate every year. You can even get a vanity plate with up to six digits on it, or buy a gift certificate for someone else.

Learn more at:
www.mooseplate.com. ■



Unlocking the Morale Issue

[Taken from the American Management Association email posting December 28, 2010]

By: [Drew J. Stevens, Ph.D.](#)

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About the Author(s)

Drew J. Stevens, Ph.D., is an Organizational Development specialist with expertise in training and talent management. Dr. Stevens assists organizations to dramatically increase business growth through talent management. He is author of the soon-to-be-released book *Split Second Leadership*.

The biggest issue for any organization, large or small, that stumps growth is worker productivity. With economic volatility currently impacting profits, productivity issues can wreak havoc already on the brink of zero margins. In addition, when worker productivity falters, costs are higher.

The rationale for not attending to the issue is that senior officers and human resource personnel are too busy, lack the funds, and lack time to focus on it. However, dismissing the issue only brings about added workforce stress. Boosting worker productivity with a focus on morale improvement leads to improvement in the bottom line: productivity and profits.

The reason that worker productivity and morale are so vital to every organization includes the following:

It leads to lower attrition. The concern is not a loss of individuals; it is the loss of knowledge. The concept of “brain drain” in organizations is imperative in a knowledge-based economy.

It leads to less infighting. Suffice to say there is much argument in organizations. However, when the culture is more collaborative and there is internal customer service, more things get completed on time and on budget. Examples include Zappos, Best Buy, and FedEx.

It leads to proper hiring. Great production stems from having the right individuals on the team. The only method of employment assurance is measuring your best performers from the average. Albeit there are few recent studies, but, in 2007, the Gallup Organization estimated that 22 million actively disengaged employees cost the American economy as much as \$350 billion dollars per year in absenteeism, illness, and other problems.

Just to be clear, there are numerous issues that impact worker productivity and morale. Hiring, great management, communication, all lead to a great organizational culture. There is little reason to spend huge sums of money or hire new employees; yet, it is important to make some subtle changes to help alleviate costs and eroding profits.

The trend now is that many employed individuals that survived

layoffs are seeking new opportunities. They are burned out from lower wages, doing more with less, and a mechanistic organizational culture. According to a March 2010 study from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, employees are voluntarily leaving jobs at a larger pace than terminations. The impact can be devastating to organizations.

“Replacing a manager costs an average of 2.5 times an executive's salary, and 2 times a manager's compensation,” according to a survey of 262 companies by OL Partners.

With costs in mind, here are some recommendations to rectify the morale and worker productivity issues in your organization:

1. Constant Communication. Research on worker productivity for over 20 years states the importance of employer/employee relationships. Individuals do not leave companies, they leave poor managers. Relationships begin with simple and direct communication. Morale will fail when managers fail to communicate with their employees. Take the time to know who is on your team.

2. Crucial Confrontation. The inability to confront individuals about performance has undermined organizational performance. Morale diminishes when underperforming employees continually diminish performance. It is important

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Personnel Pilots Awards and Recognition Program

On Tuesday February 8, 2011 the Division of Personnel [DOP] forwarded state agencies its first Organizational Awards and Recognition Program Survey designed for the eight workforce development models on the Division of Personnel [DOP] website.

On several occasions, mostly at the monthly H.R. meetings, the Division of Personnel shared its intention to implement an Organizational Awards & Recognition Program [ARP] based upon the eight workforce development models on our website and the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program Criteria. During January and February of last year [2010] DOP piloted the program for the eight workforce development models with fifteen different agencies [departments, boards, commissions] allowing us to make adjustments/changes that improved the program. DOP has not yet piloted the Baldrige component of the A&R program. The Baldrige component will most likely take place at a later date. However, DOP plans to implement the Awards and Recognition Program one step at a time starting with the workforce development models.

DOP is now prepared to offer the A&R program for the eight workforce development models to all state agencies [departments, boards, commissions]. This will be a three-year pilot program that contains two levels of award and

recognition. DOP forwarded all agencies a questionnaire related to each of the workforce models on the DOP website. Agencies will have until the **end of the work day Friday March 4th** to respond to the questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire will be tabulated and the results will be shared with the agencies. Those agencies qualifying for a certificate will be notified which certificate level they are qualified to receive and they will be asked to send representatives to the fall Workforce Development Summit to be recognized and receive their certificate.

Here's how the scoring works! With the Level I award and recognition program you can select from 5 possible answers/responses for each question. The responses are as follows:

1. Not met [0 points];
2. Up to 25% of organization meets this criterion [1 point];
3. 26% to 50% of organization meets this criterion [2 points];
4. 51% to 75% of organization meets this criterion [3 points]; and
5. 76% to 100% of organization meets this criterion [4] points.

In the Level I Awards and Recognition Program the agency may qualify for a **Certificate** depending upon their percentage rating for a specific workforce model/program. Agencies are eligible to receive a certificate for each of the

8 workforce development models/programs. Certificate titles and needed percentage ratings are listed below:

- * Certificate of Participation - for agencies achieving 50-59% in a specific category [e.g. customer Service]
- * Certificate of Progress - for agencies achieving 60-69% in a specific category; [e.g. strategic planning]
- * Certificate of Achievement - for agencies achieving 70-79% in a specific category; [workforce planning]
- * Certificate of Commitment - for agencies achieving 80-89% in a specific category; [knowledge transfer]
- * Certificate of Competency - for agencies achieving 90-100% in a specific category [employee award & r e c o g n i t i o n] .

The Level II Award and Recognition Program is for agencies achieving an average of 70% or greater when combining the scores from all 8 workforce development models. DOP will add the totals for each category and divide that number by the maximum number of points attainable. This will provide DOP with a percentage rating for each agency. At Level I DOP will accept the state agency self-score and agencies are not expected to provide documentation

Personnel Pilots Awards and Recognition Program *continued from page 8*

for their ratings. Should any agency qualify for a Level II award they would be expected to provide documentation regarding their workforce development programs.

Because most agencies have divisions, bureaus, and/or sections this survey is designed to provide credit when one division, bureau, and/or section has implemented a program or meets criteria while other divisions, bureaus, or sections have not implemented a program or are not meeting the criteria. An example would be an agency with four divisions. One division may have implemented a Knowledge Management and Transfer process while the other three have not implemented the process. The agency can claim credit by checking the response "up to 25% of organization meets

this criterion".

This program will measure incremental progress, from year to year, and provide state agencies with the recognition they deserve for progress and/or maintenance of performance excellence standards. This program will also provide organizational leaders with baseline nationally recognized performance excellence criteria that can be used for organizational goal setting, progress measurement in the 8 DOP workforce development categories, and allow for sharing of best practices from agency to agency through the implementation of an annual Awards and Recognition Summit.

This is a three-year pilot program. DOP expects "bugs" in the program and will do its best to solve problems as they occur. The ques-

tionnaire is web based using survey monkey. All the agency need do is click on the provided link to access the survey. It is recommended the agency leadership group discuss and reach a consensus rating for each question. An alternative is to assign one or more members of the leadership team with broad knowledge of the organization to complete the survey. All questionnaires were distributed to the agency Human Resource Administrator, or person serving that function.

DOP looks forward to providing certificates to agencies meeting performance excellence standards and hopes to see a large response to the pilot program. All questions can be addressed to Peter Gamache at peter.gamache@nh.gov

■

DOP Pilots Skills Assessment & Career Center

The Division of Personnel began piloting its Skills Assessment & Career Center which is designed to provide work related skills assessment and career counseling services for existing New Hampshire Executive Branch State Employees. The goal is to provide individual counseling and career development assistance by guiding employees through a variety of assessment tools, providing career consultation, educational assistance information, identification of training needs, and assistance in

creating a career development plan that will help employees further their careers and professional growth while employed by the State of New Hampshire. Supervisors and managers are welcome to contact the Center for assistance with developing an Individual Development Plan for their employee [s].

Career Development is an organized process that combines career planning activities with acquiring skills and knowledge or enhance-

ment of existing skills and knowledge for job mastery and professional development. Career Development can also be used to match employee goals with the public service goals of the state organization. The purpose of career development is to enhance each employee's current job performance, enable individuals to take advantage of future job opportunities, fulfill agencies' goals for a dynamic and effective workforce, and to assist agencies in retaining valuable employees. ■

UNH Internship Program Begins!

The Division of Personnel and the University of New Hampshire Master of Public Administration and Master of Business Administration programs have reached agreement on a process for providing graduate students with a non-paid “for credit” internship experience in state government. The purpose of the Division of Personnel Student Internship Program is to create mutually beneficial partnerships with graduate level students pursuing one or more of the following:

1. A career in state government;
2. Acquisition of knowledge about the operations of state government;
3. Sharing of knowledge, skills, abilities, and ideas to help state government deliver quality services to citizens.

The Division of Personnel Student Internship Program will allow the student to experience and participate in state government operations under the supervision of an administrator approved by the sponsoring state agency and the Division of Personnel.

Hosting an internship can be a wonderful experience for all involved. A successful student internship provides students with an unparalleled opportunity to apply their classroom learning to the workplace. Student interns also provide host organizations with high-achieving students who bring a fresh perspective and ideas. In order for a student internship to be successful, both the site supervisor and the stu-

dent must understand how a placement differs from a job, and both must commit to working together to make the most of the opportunity.

The program provides students with an unparalleled opportunity to apply their classroom learning to the workplace. Student interns also provide host organizations with high-achieving students who bring a fresh perspective and ideas. In order for a student internship to be successful, both the site supervisor and the student must understand how a placement differs from a job, and both must commit to working together to make the most of the opportunity. Applications for a student intern to work on an agency project are due March 1, 2011. For information contact peter.gamache@nh.gov. ■

Unlocking the Morale Issue *continued from page 7*

ant when managers confront employees who do not meet expectations.

3. Focus on Feedback. Confrontation begins with feedback. It must be timely, candid, and accurate. This includes both good and bad feedback. Catch employees doing something good and tell them; need something corrected, tell them.

4. Create Collaboration. Employees respond better when they are part of the organizational process. They desire to be a part of the process and have a voice. Luis Arzua (the last Chilean miner) took control from underground and asked each trapped miner to contribute to the health and wellness of the team. Every man had a part in the rescue. Each added to the

relationships, best practices, and most important survival! It is simply a matter of placing the best individuals in the proper positions; everything else simply falls into place.

5. Remember to Reward and Recognize. Employees invest over 50 to 60 hours of their waking life for organizations. Money is not the alternative for reward. Individuals desire commendations for good work. They are more apt to remember compliments and commendations than a one percent raise the previous year.

Organizations are in a battle for survival from not only recessionary issues but worker productivity. Aside from customers, the greatest asset of any organization is its employees.

Organizational leaders must become vigilant and create a conscious effort at creating synergies that instill a better culture and working environment. Now is not the time to avoid the issue, it is time to focus on it acutely. ■

Editorial comment: When the author stated “employees invest over 50-60 hours of their waking life for organizations” we assume the author means 50-60 hours each week working for the organization. That represents 62-75 percent of the employees waking life during each five-day work week. Even if it were 40 hours of their waking life spent for the organization that would represent 50 percent of their waking life during each work week. Think about it! ■

Gail Wolek, Department of Resources and Economic Development [DRED], Receives Citation from Governor & Council

On February 16, 2010, the Suggestion and Incentive Awards Committee, with the Governor and Council's assistance, presented non-monetary recognition to Ms. Gail Wolek with a certificate for her initiative, creativity and commitment in going beyond the call of her job by dedicating her personal time and energy in organizing, managing and assisting the Governor's Gaming Study Commission. At a time when the Ten Year Strategic Development and Capital Improvement Plan was causing a torrent of requests for financial information specific to the Division, Ms. Wolek was honored by the request to assist the Gaming Study Commission and welcomed the opportunity to be part of creating the best information possible. She worked tirelessly to become more knowledgeable about the Commission and never wavered in her commitment to either entity but seemingly found energy as both arenas became more intense. The Department of Resources and Economic Development believes Ms. Wolek



Left to right: Karen Hutchins [Personnel Director], George Bald [Commissioner, DRED], Gail Wolek [DRED], Governor John Lynch

is a capable, committed and passionate individual and is truly wor-

thy of recognition for her outstanding dedication. ■

3 Ways to Inspire Employees to Be Captains of Their Careers

By [Brie Hobbs](#) · August 16th, 2010.
Provided by ReFresh Leadership online publication.

Some employees were born self-starters. Motivated and driven, these individuals know what they want from their life and career. From the internship to the C-suite,

they plot their course with precision and it is full steam ahead to every destination. Others are happy to just set sail with no one

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3 Ways to Inspire Employees to Be Captains of Their Careers Continued from page 11

to steer the ship onward.

No matter where your employees are in their career from the beginner to the experienced professional, wouldn't it be great if your entire team was passionate about their jobs? Think of the possibilities if every employee worked with determination, motivation, and drive. Work would be exciting. Employees would be engaged, effective, and happy. And most of all, your team's passion would be unstoppable. If you want driven workers who aspire to learn and grow in their careers, try these tips to motivate employees to be captains of their own fate at work.

1. Show your staff the ropes. If your employees don't man their careers with enthusiasm and drive, show them the ropes and lead by example. Inspire passion in your team by being passionate about what you do. Seek out new oppor-

tunities to learn and grow in your career and you'll inspire employees to be more driven in their's. The enthusiasm you demonstrate for your work and your employees is contagious, so share it every chance you get.

2. Give them a compass. When your employees need guidance to get started, offer them tools they can use to chart a course. From work-related book clubs to training that will increase their knowledge, make sure your employees have what they need to succeed. Be an advocate for their growth by encouraging them to attend work-related conferences, take online tutorials, and participate in professional organizations. Ask for their insight on projects where they've shown interest or promise. Give them opportunities to succeed and soon they'll be on the lookout for new challenges at work, while gaining new skills all on their own.

3. Let your employees take the wheel. If you see potential in your employees, help them develop by offering them opportunities to lead and grow. Allow them to head brainstorming or staff meetings. If they have an idea to help streamline processes, increase productivity, or solve a problem, consider letting them test it out. By allowing your employees to steer the boat from time to time, you demonstrate your belief and trust in their abilities. And when they rise to the occasion, they'll feel fulfilled and excited about their future and their job.

You want employees who are experts at what they do. You want employees who are passionate, enthusiastic, and driven every day. Help get them there by inspiring them to be captains of their career, and you'll have an engaged team you can trust in rough or calm waters. ■

Train to Understand Your Customers

The following was taken from the book "Succeeding With Teams" by Richard S. Wellings, Ph.d., Dick Schaaf and Kathy Harper Shomo.

If teams are to succeed, everyone must have a clear understanding of customer requirements. Important customer service skills include identifying customers' personal needs and expectations, learning to handle difficult situations, and knowing when to go "above and beyond" to provide extraordinary service. And how do you know what customers want? Ask!

► **Talk with customers directly**—Have team members ask them how you're doing. Pose questions like: What do we do best? What could we do better? What would you do differently if you were in our shoes?

► **Ask customers to rate you**—Find out how your service or product quality, timeliness of response, general responsiveness and overall performance compare to others doing the same thing.

► **Update the team's database**—At least annually, ask your customers to give you more detailed information on how well your

team is meeting their needs and expectations. And probe: If they gave you an exceptionally high or low rating, find out why.

Then make sure your customers know you've heard them. Get back to them about how you're implementing their ideas. Ask them if you're on the right track. The better you know your customers, the more likely you are to meet their needs. ■